

Gen. Amos HASC POSTURE Hearing Opening Statement – 12 March 2014

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith and Members of the Committee, I'm pleased to appear before you to speak about your United States Marine Corps.

Since our founding in 1775, Marines have answered the nation's call, faithfully protecting the American people and maintaining a world-class standard of military excellence...nothing has changed...we continue to do the same today. And yet...we find ourselves at a strategic inflection point in history. After 12 years of war, we are drawing down our forces in Afghanistan, resetting our institution, and *reawakening the soul of our Corps*. Today we are challenged by fiscal uncertainty that threatens both our capacity and capabilities, forcing us to sacrifice our long-term health for near-term readiness. As I have testified before many times...despite these challenges, *I remain committed to fielding the most capable and ready Marine Corps the nation is willing to pay for!*

Our greatest asset is the individual Marine...the young man and woman who wears my cloth. Our unique role as America's premier Crisis Response Force is grounded in the legendary character and warfighting ethos of our people. As we reset and prepare for future battles, all Marines are rededicating themselves to those attributes that carried Marines across the wheat fields and into the German machine guns at Belleau Wood in March of 1918...those attributes that enabled raw, combat inexperienced young Marines to courageously succeed against a determined enemy at America's first offensive operation in the Pacific – the attack at Guadalcanal in August of 1942. And lastly...those timeless strengths of character and gut-courage that enabled Marines to carry the day in an Iraqi town named Fallujah, and against a determined enemy in the Taliban strongholds of Marjah and Sangin. Your Corps is rededicating itself to the timeless attributes of: *persistent discipline; faithful obedience to orders and instructions; concerned and engaged leadership; and strict adherence to standards*. These iron-clad imperatives have defined our Corps for 238 years...they will serve us well in the decades to come.

As we gather here today, some 30 thousand Marines are forward deployed around the world, promoting peace, protecting our nation's interests, and securing our defense...but we don't do this alone. Our partnership with the Navy provides America an unmatched Naval Expeditionary capability. Our relationship with the Navy is a symbiotic one...my relationship with Admiral Greenert is unprecedented. This is why I share CNO's concerns about the impacts associated with a marked paucity of ship building funds. America's engagement throughout the future security environment of the next two decades will be Naval in character. To be forward engaged, and to be present when it matters most we need capital ships...and those ships need to be loaded with Marines!

Expeditionary Naval Forces are our nation's insurance policy. We're a hedge against uncertainty in an unpredictable world. The Navy-Marine Corps team provides power projection from the sea, responding immediately to crisis...when success is measured in hours not days. From the Super Typhoon that tragically struck the Philippines late last year, to the rescue of American citizens in South Sudan over Christmas...your forward deployed naval forces were there...we carried the day for America!

As the joint force draws down and we conclude combat operations in Afghanistan, some argue that we are done with conflict. My view is different. The world will remain a dangerous place...there will be no peace dividend for America...nor will there be a shortage of work for its Marines. *Ladies and Gentlemen...we will not – do less with less...we will – do the same with less!*

In closing, you have my promise that we will only ask for what we need. We will continue to prioritize and make the hard decisions before coming to Congress.

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Once again, I thank the Committee for your continued support and I am prepared to answer your questions.

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